

Message Text

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ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 CCO-00 /026 W

----- 021079

Z 181335Z SEP 75 ZFF-1

FM AMEMBASSY AMMAN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC FLASH 5704

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 AMMAN 6333

EXDIS

E.O. 1165 GDS

TAGS: MASS, PFOR, JO, US

SUBJECT: INTIAL EMBASSY COMMENT ON JORDANIAN STATEMENT ON HAWKS

REF: AMMAN 6332

1. REFTEL FORWARDS EMBASSY (UNOFFICIAL) TRANSLATION.
ORIGINAL ARABIC STATEMENT WAS RELEASED BY GOJ THROUGH
OFFICIAL SPOKESMAN AT 1400 LOCAL.

2. EMBASSY HAS REVIEWED INITIAL PARAGRAPH WHICH DE-
SCRIBED FACT GOJ INFORMED OF APPROVAL OF HAWK SALE AND
CERTAIN SALIENT CHARACTERISTICS OF PRESIDENT FORD'S

MESSAGE TO CONGRESS. IT IS NOTABLE FOR THE OMISSION
OF THE FACT THAT PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE INDICATES
HAWKS WILL BE PERMANETLY IMPACED AT FIXED INSTALLATIONS
AS NON-MOBILE ANTI-AIRCRAFT WEAPONS AND THAT TRAINING
WILL BE APPROPRIATE TO HAWKS IN NON-MOBILE MODE.
WE SUSPECT THIS IS DONE TO AVOID CALLING UNDUE LOCAL
ATTENTION TO THESE FEASUTES OF THE LETTER WHICH WERE VERY
PAINFUL FOR JODAN TO ACCEPT. SINCE SECOND PORTIONOF
TEXT CONTAINS JORDANIAN GENERAL OBJECTIONS TO PRESIDENT'S
LETTER BUT COUCHED IN SOMEWHAT AMBIGUOUS TERMS AS OBJECTION
TO PROVISIONS OF SALES CONTRACT, OMISSIN OF ABOVE
POINTS CAN ALSO BE CONSTRUED IN POSITIVE FASHION--
THAT JORDANIAN MESSAGE DID NOT SPECIFICALLY OBJECT TO
THOSE POINTS IN PRESIDENT'S LETTER.

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3. SECOND PARAGRAPH OF MESSAGE CONTAINS SIGNIFICANT SUBSTANCE. FIRST POINT WHICH JORDANIANS MAKE IN TERMS WHICH ARE PROBABLY CAREFULLY AMBIGUOUS IS THAT IT WOULD NOT SIGN A CONTRACT REPEAT CONTRACT CONTAINING RESTRICTIONS AND OBLIGATIONS INCLUDED IN THE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE TO CONGRES, WHICH JORDAN CONSIDERS "UNIQUEZ" OR DEGRADING". RIFAI'S EFFORT HERE WE BELIEVE IS TO TAKE A TOUGH LINE IN PUBLIC FOR BENEFIT OF LOCAL AND ARAB AUDIENCES WHILE AT THE SAME TIME FULLY REALIZING THAT LETTER OF OFFER WILL NOT CONTAIN SPECIFICATIONS FROM PRESIDENT'S LETTER INCLUDED IN "THE GENERAL PARAGRAPH" WHICH JORDAN HAD EARLIER APPROVED. RIFAI KNOWS CONTRACT WILL NOT INCLUDE SUCH CLAUSES IN ANY EVENT. SINCE ALL OF OUR CONTRACTS WITH JORDAN AND WITH OTHER COUNTRIES TO OUR KNOWLEDGE INCLUDE SELF-DEFENSE AND NO TRANSFER PROVISIONS AND STANDARD DOD CANCELLATION CLAUSE, WE ASSUME AND HOPE IT CAN BE EXPLAINED TO INTERESTED MEMBERS OF CONGRESS THAT THEY ARE NOT "UNIQUE" RESTRICTIONS AND THEREFORE MUST BE ACCEPTED BY JORDANIANS AS IS REQUIRED BY US LAW AND LONG PRACTICE HERE.

4. SECOND POINT MADE IS THAT WEAPON WHICH ARRIVES IN JORDAN "IS JORDANIAN WEAPON" THIS IS VASTLY WATERED DOWN VERSION OF POINT MADE IN EARLIER PROPOSED STATEMENT THAT SINCE JORDANIANS WOULD OWN THE WEAPONS AFTER THEIR ARRIVAL THEY WOULD DECIDE ON DEPLOYMENT. AS PRESENTLY STATED THE TEXT HAS NO REAL MEANING, ALTHOUGH WE PRESUME JORDANIANS MIGHT USE THIS HANDLE TO EXPLAIN PRIVATELY TO MEMBERS OF INTERESTED PUBLIC THAT AGAIN IT IS NOT ACCEPTING IN THE CONTRACT A SPECIAL SERIES OF OBLIGATIONS ON ITS WEAPONS SYSTEMS. HOWEVER RIFAI HAS AVOIDED ANY IMPLICATION OF THAT, WE BELIEVE IN TEXT AS DELIVERED.

5. FINAL SUSTANTIVE POINT IS STATEMENT IS A REPEAT OF KING STANDING POSITION THAT WEAPONS SHOULD ARRIVE WHEN TRAINED CREWS ARE READY. WHILE IT IMPLIES THAT DELIVERY SCHEDULES IN PRESIDENTS MESSAGE ARE NOT DIRECTLY IN ACCORD WITH HIS OWN DESIRES, SINCE HIS DESIRES ARE DEPENDENT UPON COMPLETION OF AS

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YET UNPLANNED SERIES OF TRAINING PROGRAM, ONE RESULT COULD WELL BE ACCORDING TO LOCAL MILITARY EXPOERTS THAT PRESENT SCHEDULE IN EARLY STAGES AND PERHAPS EVEN LATER MIGHT BE CLOSE TO THE MARK OR EVEN PROVIDE FOR EARLY DELIVERY AT SOME POINTS. JORDANISNS ARE HAVING DIFFICULTIES FINDINGENOUGH PROPER ENGLISH LANGUAGE QUALIFIED TECHNICIANS TO COMPLETE THE INTENSIVE ELECTRONIC AND OTHER TECHNICAL TRAINING PROGRAM IN THE HAWK PROGRAM

AS IT IS. WE EXPECT THESE CONDITIONS TO CONTINUE.
WHILE THIS INFORMATION IS NOT AS GOOD AS EXPLANATION
AS "RESERVATIONS ABOUT THE DELIVERY SCHEDULE DISCUSSED IN
EARLIER CABLES AND CERTAINLY THE LANGUAGE IS NOT AS HAPPILY
CHOSEN AS WE MIGHT WISH, WE BELIEVE IT SHOULD BE POSSIBLE TO
EXPLAIN TO INQUIRERS THAT THIS DEMAND WILL NOT NECESSARILY
RESULT IN A SPEED UP. WHILE KING CONCEIVES IT AS SUCH AND
IT IS CLEAR THAT IF SALE IS PERMITTED TO GO THROUGH WE
WILL HAVE A TRYING TIME WITH JORDANIANS ON THIS POINT, PREMATURE
CHARACTERIZATION OF THIS TO THE CONGRESS AS A SPEED UP
NECESSARILY IS NOT IN OUR JUDGEMENT JUSTIFIED.

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ACTION SS-25

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FM AMEMBASSY AMMAN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC FLASH 5705

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 AMMAN 6333

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6. FINAL SENTIMENT THAT IF JORDAN CANNOT MAKE THE
SALE ON THIS BASIS, THEN IT WILL HAVE TO GO ELSEWHERE
BUT ON THE SAME COPDITIONS, REFLECTS A HEALTHY EFFORT
TO ENSURE THAT IF IT EVER DOES GO ELSEWHERE(TO THE
SOVIETS) IT WILL BE EQUALLY, IF NOT MORE DEMANDING, IN
ITS CONDITIONS. RIFAI YESTERDAY REMAKED TO AMBASSADOR
THAT WHILE THE US WAS CERTAINNLY TOUGH TO DEAL WITH
EVERYTHING HE HAD SEEN FROM PRESIDENT SADAT'S SPEECH
TO THE ASU AND HEARD FROM THE SYRIANS INDICATED THAT
THE SOVIETS WERE PROBABLY WORSE, INSISTING ON THE
PRESENCE OF TECHNICIANS AS A PRIOR CONDITION TO ANY
WEAPON SALE.

7. WHAT WE HAVE INDICATED ABOVE IS OBVIOUSLY AN EFFORT
TO PUT JORDANIAN STATEMENT IN BEST POSSIBLE LIGHT
BOTH IN TERMS OF ANY COMMENTS WHICH DEPARTMENT MIGHT
FEEL IT HAS TO MAKE TO PUBLIC AND CONGRESS ON THIS

STATEMENT AND ALSO IN EXPLAINING TO CASE, BINGHAM
AND OTHER OPPONENTS WHAT IT REALLY MEANS. WE ARE
CONVINCED THAT RIFAI AND KING HAVE ATTEMPTED TO DO
THEIR BEST TO STEER A MEANINGFUL COURSE AT BETWEEN
SUFFERING A COMPLETE LACK OF CREDIBILITY AT HOME AND
IN THE ARAB WORLD ON ONE HAND AND CALLING OFF THE
AGREEMENT WITH CONGRESS ON THE OTHER. WE RECOGNIZE
THE FRUSTRATION AND AGONY WHICH HAS
ACCOMPANIED THIS PROCESS IN WASHINGTON, AS INDEED DO THEY AND
HOPE THAT DEPARTMENT CAN EXPLAIN TO CONGRESS CONTINUING
JORDANIAN DESIRE TO OBTAIN HAWKS AND ITS RELUCTANT
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PREPAREDNESS TO LIVE WITH MAJOR FEATURES OF PRESIDENT'S
LETTER BUT WITH FIRM HOPE OF REVIEW WITH US CAREFULLY
AT AN APPROPRIATE TIME THE DELIVERY SCHEDULE ISSUE.

11. WE BELIEVE THAT THG GOJ HAVING SALVAGED KING'S
POSITION AND DIGNITY IN REPLYING TO PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE TO CONGRESS
NOW
HOPES (BUT IS BY NO MEANS ASSURED) THE MATTER MAY BE LAID
TO REST BY CONGRESS AND THAT HAWK DEAL HOWEVER
BLOODIES CAN NO GO THROUGH. NEEDLESS TO SAY IF
CONGRESS PROCEEDS TO TAKE NEGATIVE ACTION SUCH AS
ATTACHING SPECIFIC CONDITIONS IN LETTER OF OFFER OR
CONTRACT BEYOND THOSE NORMALLY CONTAINED IN SUCH CON-
TRACTS, WE BELIEVE THE JORDANIANS WOULD BE OBLIGED TO
HARDEN THEIR OWN POSITION WHICH AS CURRENTLY FORMULATED
WE HOPE WILL OFFERS SOME ROOM FOR PERMITTING HAWK
DEAL TO BE CONCLUDED.

12. WE WERE JUST IN TOUCH WITH PRIME MINISTER RIFAI.
HE SAID HE HOPES WE CAN AVOID AT ALL COSTS ANY FURTHER
TRADING OF PUBLIC COMMENT AND TO LET THINGS COOL DOWN, HE
THEN HOPES WE CAN BEGIN THE PROCESS OF ACTIVELY WORKING
THROUGH THE DETAILS OF THE DEAL. RIFAI UNDERSTANDS
THAT ALL OF OUR STANDARD CONDITIONS WOULD BE INCLUDED
IN THE CONTRACT.
PICKERING

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